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SOME COLONIAL HISTORY OF BEAUFORT COUNTY NORTH CAROLINA

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SOME COLONIAL HISTORY OF BEAUFORT COUNTY NORTH CAROLINA

BY
FRANCIS HODGES COOPER

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Some Colonial History of Beaufort County, North Carolina[1]

GEOGRAPHY, TOPOGRAPHY, AND RESOURCES OF THE COUNTY.

In dealing with the history of any nation, country, state, county, or place, one cannot usually account for the past events of the section with which he deals if he has not considered the physiography of that section. Therefore, before we look at some aspects of the history of colonial Beaufort County, it is necessary that we take a good survey of the physiography of the county.

Beaufort County lies in the tidal plain section of Eastern North Carolina, embracing in its boundaries that arm of Pamlico Sound known as Pamlico River. The county is bounded on the north by Martin and Washington counties; on the east by Hyde and Pamlico counties; on the south by Pamlico and Craven counties, and on the west by Craven and Pitt counties. Its area is 819 square miles, being nearly 300 square miles larger than the average for the counties of the state.

Owing to the nearness of the county to the Atlantic Ocean, the height of the county above sea-level varies from about forty feet on the western border to about nine or ten feet in the extreme eastern part. The general surface of the county is level; there are no hills more than ten feet high, with the possible exception of a river or creek bank. On account of the general levelness of the county the rivers and creeks are broad and shallow, the deep water being found only in very limited channels. The one great river, which traverses the whole length of Beaufort County, is known as the Pamlico below Washington, and as the Tar above that city. The other river, which drains part of the county and which forms the eastern boundary between Beaufort and Hyde counties, is the Pungo River. The names of these three rivers are the sole remaining monuments of the Pampticough, the Tau, and the Matchapungo tribes of Indians whom the first settlers found living where we live today. The other

[1]This paper was awarded the first prize in the Colonial Dames contest for 1915.

streams of importance are Tranters Creek in the western part of the county, on the north side of Pamlico River, being tributary to it, and South Creek on the south side of the river, and also a tributary to the Pamlico. The soil of the county presents a variation from very sandy, on the Pitt side, to a very dark loam on the Hyde and Pamlico side. In passing from the sandy loam on the west to the black loam of the east, different varieties of clayey soil and stiff, closely compacted soil are everywhere to be found. The subsoil is invariably clay of different textures.

The flat nature of the land leaves the county without the natural resources of waterpower. The few instances in which waterpower is used are examples of the wasteful flooding of large tracts of "lowground" land, in several cases a six-foot fall of water necessitating the inundation of from three to even fifteen square miles of land. There are no minerals found in the county, but there are extensive deposits of marl at no very great depth, and good fire-clays are to be found all through the middle section of the county. Marl is dug on both sides of the river, both above and below Washington, and there are several kilns where terra cotta tiling and a good quality of brick are burnt. Sand is abundant, and the number of uses to which concrete is put is thus materially increased.

Until the advent of the portable steam sawmill the forest resources of the county were unsurpassed by any other section of the state. There were once large primeval forests of pitch and yellow pine, as is evinced by the fact that Washington shipped a large amount of naval stores in the years preceding and immediately following the Civil War. These forests have since been largely cut, being the source of much wealth to the county. There are also large areas of swamps timbered with fine growths of cypress and black and sweet gums. Junipers are also abundant in many sections of the county. Oaks of many varieties, maples, ashes, poplars, and elms are very abundant, some of them being of such abundance as to be of considerable commercial value. The shrubs, plants, flowers, roots, and herbs of the county are almost innumerable.

There is one other great natural resource of the county that furnished employment for its full share of the population of the

county, and which is the source of considerable wealth. This is the fish and oyster industry of this section. Being situated on a large river flowing into a sound, which in its turn connects with the Atlantic, the county has at all times of the year a very large run of both salt and freshwater fish. Shad, herring, trout, blue fish, spots, mackerel, mullets, and a long list of the more common freshwater fish are to be found on the markets in season. Oysters are usually plentiful except in May, June, July, and August, the weather being too warm in these months to permit of oysters and clams being transported very far from the place where they are caught. The oysters, fish, and game shipped to northern markets from Beaufort County are considered the earliest and finest-flavored of any received.

With such a location, with such a goodly number of navigable rivers, with such a variety of soils, with immense forests, with good building sands and clays, with such valuable fisheries—in fact, with every natural resource except minerals and an abundance of water-power, and being possessed of such a mild climate, it is no wonder, then, that what is now Beaufort County was attractive to the early settlers of North Carolina.

FORMATION AND EARLY HISTORY.

The history of the present county of Beaufort really began at a period earlier than 1705, in which year, at a meeting of the Governor, Charles Eden, and Thomas Pollock, Samuel Swann, John Arderne, and Edward Moseley, deputies of the Lords Proprietors, it was decided that "whereas the county of Bath, is now grown populous and daily encreasing, do hereby think fit and it is hereby ordered, that three Precincts be erected in the said county, bounded as follows, viz.: The precinct of Pampticough [now Beaufort and Pitt counties,] lying on the north side of Pampticough River and beginning at Moline's Creek, and westerly to the head of the river. The Precinct of Wickham, beginning at the said Moline's Creek, so including all the lands and Rivers from said Creek to Matchepungo Bluff; and the Precinct of Archdale taking all the south side of

said river, and at present, including all the Inhabitants of Newse."[2] The same statute, it might be remarked in passing, gave each of these precincts two members in the Assembly.

Prior to this time all that territory south of the Albemarle Sound and Roanoke River was known as Bath County. Really the limits and authority of the county extended only about as far as the colonists had pushed westward, which, roughly speaking, was about 75 miles inland, usually along the navigable rivers. Bath was by far the largest county ever created within the state, for when an early county was formed, the western limit of the county was considered to terminate in the western boundary of the colony.[3] These western boundaries sometimes called for a stretch of territory from the Atlantic to the mountains, or from the Atlantic to the Mississippi, or from the Atlantic to the Southern (Pacific) Ocean. In this case, Bath County embraced a vast belt of land reaching across the present United States. By comparing it with a present-day map of North Carolina, we find that Bath County really contained and exerted jurisdiction over all or parts of Dare, Tyrrell, Washington, Martin, Pitt, Beaufort, Hyde, Pamlico, Craven, Greene, Lenoir, Jones, Duplin, Onslow, Carteret, Pender, Sampson, and New Hanover counties. Considering only these counties, what a princely domain would Bath County have been, had it only been more populous!

Besides the county of Bath, Albemarle was the other great county in the colony. These two counties in 1705 comprised the whole of what is now North Carolina, and more besides. Albemarle was the first to be peopled, settlers pushing down from Virginia and planting the first permanent settlement in the region north of Albemarle Sound. From this same source, and often by way of these Albemarle settlements, the settlements around Pamlico Sound were made. The people making the settlements were usually English, even when they came from the New England colonies, as a good many did. The names of the people who applied for land titles are good English names, with the occasional appearance of a French name. The English people came for social and economic, and not for religious reasons, as did the French Hugenots who settled in

[2] *C. R.*, II, 629.
[3] Clark, *Indian Massacre and Tuscarora War*, "Booklet," v. 2.

Bath and Albemarle. All of us know that there is no Bath County today, and just so there is no Albemarle County. The names of the two oldest counties in the state have been lost, with the exception of the name of a town in one case and the name of a town and sound in the other. Bath County, formed in 1696, named in honor of the Earl of Bath (the head of the Lords Proprietors), divided in 1705 into precincts, finally ceased to exist even in mention.

Beaufort County was formed in 1705. It was visited in 1709 by Lawson, and two years later it was a witness to and a chief sufferer in the Indian uprisings of 1711. It was the seat of the Proprietary Governor, Charles Eden, who lived for a short time at Bath, about 1715. Just about this time it was visited by Teache, and in 1717 it was the county to which this pirate was brought after being killed. Fort Reading, the name given to a fort which was established near the present site of the town of Washington, was established during the second decade of the eighteenth century. In 1715, Bath, the principal town in the county, was made a port of entry, thus tending to increase the commerce of the county. In 1734, St. Thomas Church, at Bath Town, was completed, being not then the first Episcopal church in the colony, but being now the oldest church which stands essentially as it was erected. In 1738 the legislature recognized the will of the people, and called the county by the name of Beaufort. This name had been chosen by the people some time before, but only now were the boundaries of the different counties, so promiscuously referred to in the Colonial Records, run out by special enactment of the legislature. The people were unusually well pleased with Henry, Duke of Beaufort, one of the Lords Proprietors, and a Palatine, and it was for him that they called the old precinct of Pampticough. Exactly how early the people affixed some other name to this region is unknown, but Pampticough is not entered at all on Lawson's map of 1709. Between the years 1740 and 1760 the people of Beaufort were undisturbed, except for the outbreak of the French and Indian War. They furnished their share of the militia sent from North Carolina against the French and the Indians. In 1760, upon a petition of the people concerned, the western part of the county was cut off and formed into Pitt County and St. Michael's parish, Tranters Creek being the dividing

line between the two counties then as now. The years 1760-1775 were years of healthy growth, both in numbers, in religious ideas, and in the love of peace, liberty, and freedom, for as Wheeler[4] says, "the inhabitants of Beaufort were distinguished for their early devotion to the principles of liberty," as is proved by the fact that Beaufort was well represented and her representatives well instructed at the congresses which met at Halifax, New Bern, and Hillsborough.[5]

TROUBLES WITH THE INDIANS.

Within two years after John Lawson, our earliest historian, made the assertion that of all the colonies, North Carolina was the only one that had been established without bloodshed, the greater portion of Eastern North Carolina was plunged into the throes of a bitter struggle with the Indians, which followed immediately upon the terrible attempt of the savages to prevent the white man from encroaching upon the hunting grounds of the Indian. Once in a while a white man would harm an Indian, and the revengeful and relentless Red Man would retaliate by killing the settler. Once in a while, tempted by some worldly possession of the white man's, the Indian would kill the white man, and be brought to justice in the courts of the little colony if he was ever caught up with. How different was the Indian Massacre of 1711, and how much more interesting to us should this be than a study of the troubles with the Indians of Kentucky or Florida or Massachusetts. Because of its local interest, it should be especially interesting to every citizen of Beaufort and Craven counties.

Different reasons have been assigned as the cause of the trouble of 1711, but the chief causes, everything else set aside, were the steady encroachments of the whites upon the hunting and fishing grounds of the Indians, though the struggles of the whites among themselves as a result of the Carey Rebellion, which had been quelled only a little before, may have exerted a baneful influence upon the sanguinary Indians. Some of the contemporary writers

[4] *Historical Sketches of North Carolina*, p. 29.

[5] Though I have not mentioned each reference specifically in the running recital of events in the county, I have looked each one carefully up, and find my statements substantiated in each case, usually by the Colonial Records.

say that both Carey and Roach, his subordinate, were influential in persuading the Indians to make the attack upon the white settlements. This last reason is advanced by Dr. Hawks in the first volume of his history, and is a little shaky as far as proof is concerned, but it is sufficient to say that the two first causes would have been sufficient to bring on the war. The fact remains that the war did break out, and that the people living on the Tar and Pamlico rivers, and those living in the vicinity of Bath, were the heaviest sufferers. Mr. Urmstone, writing to the Secretary of the S. P. G., says that Bath "is now the seat of war,"[6] and later as well as contemporary writers say that the struggle was severest in what is now Beaufort County.

Had the Indians not been inferior to the whites in their capacity for strategy and concerted action, and had they been equipped and armed even as well as the colonists were, the settlements planted here before 1711 would surely have been wiped out of existence. They were immensely superior to the whites in numbers, for according to Judge Clark, the Indians could muster around eighteen hundred fighting men, whereas the colonists could gather only about a thousand men capable of bearing arms.[7] This latter number was smaller than it should have been, owing to the decreased numbers due to the troubles with Carey. On the side of the Indians, by far the greatest number was furnished by the Tuscaroras, who were the leaders in the movement to massacre the whites, and who assumed the work of the extermination of the Indians along the southern bank of the Roanoke, and especially along the Tar and Pamlico rivers. This was the home and hunting grounds of the Tuscaroras. On the north side of Albemarle Sound and the Roanoke River lived the Meherrins, Notoways, Chowanokes, Pasquotanks, Connamax, and Yeopims,[8] who were not very formidable, being considerably outnumbered by the whites in that section of the colony. The Pamlicos, it appears, were to labor with the Tuscaroras in slaughtering the whites above Bath and along the Pamlico and Tar rivers, while the Mattamuskeets were to surprise the settlements to the east of Bath. The Cotechneys and the Cores, from whom Core Sound draws its

[6] *C. R.*, I, 885.
[7] *Indian Massacre and Tuscarora War.* "Booklet," v. 2.
[8] *Ibid.*

name, were to massacre the Swiss and the Palatines at New Bern. To all appearances, the plot was a general one, considering the fact that it was to begin at sunrise on the day before the new moon in September, which was the 23d of the month. According to this, the massacre began at sunrise of the 22d, as was ever afterwards remembered in the colony.

On the 21st the Tuscaroras and their allies began to spread through the colonies in order to make the attack, which was to begin next morning, all the more concerted, and to carry it through with dispatch. The settlers little suspected treachery from the increased numbers of Indians, who merely asked for bread. The next morning, however, just as the sun rose, the red men began their hellish work, and in a few hours several hundred perished. Some account of the atrocities committed and the general pitilessness of the cruel Indian may be found in a letter from Christopher Gale to his sister, under the date of November 2, 1711.[9] They are as revolting as could be imagined, and I venture the assertion that they could be repeated today only by a savage people. Most of the outlying settlements in our county were surprised, the inhabitants, of all ages and races and of both sexes, being killed, being often treated as was the family of a certain Mr. Nevill, who lived a short distance from Bath.[10] Not all of the settlers were killed, for a goodly number gathered wherever there was a fortified place. Crowds from what is now Beaufort County flocked to Bath and to Fort Reading, near where Washington now stands. The Indians did not bury the bodies of their victims, merely mutilating them terribly, and leaving them "for prey to the dogs and wolves and vultures," whilst the care of the settlers was to strengthen their garrisons and to secure those still alive.

Though slaughter continued for a space of three days,[11] during which time Governor Hyde tried to put an end to some of the barbarity, his efforts were almost futile, for the Governor was able to raise only about one hundred and sixty men, owing to the necessity for garrisons, to the fact that a great many of the colonists were Quakers who would not fight, and to the fact that a good

[9] *C. R.*, I, 826-827.
[10] *Ibid.*
[11] *Indian Massacre and the Tuscarora War.* "Booklet," v. 2.

part of all who were able had fled to Virginia. Hyde could get no assistance from the friendly Indians, so general and widespread was the conspiracy of the Tuscaroras. Aid was sought from Virginia and South Carolina, though the chief thing accomplished by the Virginia troops was the liberation of Baron de Graffenreid, who, together with John Lawson and his servants, had been taken prisoner on the 22d of September, and who, unlike poor Lawson, had not been put to death. The Virginia troops may have overawed the Indians, and thus aided in checking their depredations to some extent. The greatest and most material aid came from our southern sister, South Carolina, for the assembly of that colony voted to send Colonel Barnwell with 600 militia and some 350 Indians. These reinforcements made good progress over the wilderness which then separated the two Carolinas, and Colonel Barnwell, on the 28th of January, 1712, after having driven the Indians to a palisaded fort about twenty miles above New Bern, and after surrounding and killing a good number of the Indians, both inside and outside the fort, agreed to a capitulation and treaty with them, instead of utterly crushing their power as the people desired and expected him to do.[12] This treaty which Barnwell made he allowed his allied Indians to break and to carry off a large number of captives to South Carolina to be sold into West Indian servitude. Thus the hatred and animosity of the aborigines was only aggravated, and their power was far from broken. Colonel Barnwell had to give up his command on account of a wound received in the encounter at Fort Barnwell, so called after the captor of the fort rather than being named for some defender.

It appears that Virginia prepared to help the North Carolinians in their distress, but that when they heard of Barnwell's treaty with the Tuscaroras they refused to act against the Indians for fear of incurring their hatred. However, when the Assembly, on March 12, 1712, voted 4,000 pounds sterling for the purpose of carrying on the war, and when the Assembly petitioned both South Carolina and Virginia, the South Carolinians were the only ones who helped us. Judge Clark says that this second time South

[12] *C. R.*, I, 840.

Carolina sent Colonel James Moore with fifty white soldiers and about a thousand Indians to aid us, and the records show that Virginia voted 3,500 pounds to aid in carrying on the war, and 600 pounds to buy blankets and other supplies for our troops. Governor Hyde had died on the 8th of September, and Thomas Pollock had been elected to fill his place, being given the title of President. President Pollock made a treaty with Tom Blunt, one of the less hostile chiefs of the Tuscaroras, by which a good part of the southern and eastern Indians were led to side with the English. Thus aided from abroad, with finances strengthened, and with power in the newly-created allies, the people of the colony prepared to make a last desperate attempt to break the power of the Indians.

Moore came early in December, 1712, and, owing to the trouble in getting food, Pollock asked Moore to march his men into the Albemarle country. Even there the scarcity of food was great, and it was with difficulty that the Indians were kept from mutinying. About the middle of January, 1713, Moore led his Indians to Fort Reading, in our county, where they remained encamped on account of snow until the 4th of February. Early in February, Moore, together with the militia which North Carolina had furnished, and with his Indians and fifty whites, laid siege to Nahucke, the Indian stronghold in Greene County, near where Snow Hill now stands. The Indians failed to dig wells in the fort, and Moore, noticing this, cut off their supply of water. He then stormed the fort and took it, together with 800 prisoners, after having killed a large number; the allied Carolina forces lost only about 140 in killed and wounded, about 95 of them being Indians.[13] The Indian allies, after having taken their prisoners, left Moore, as they left Barnwell before him, only about 140 remaining. But the power of the Indians in Eastern Carolina was broken; the greater part of the Tuscaroras, together with some smaller tribes, joined the Five Nations of the North in New York, being henceforth known as the Six Nations. Except for a few sallies made by a small tribe for the next year or two there was not much more war. Thanks to South Carolina and the Yemassee Indians, we had been saved.

[13] *Indian Massacre and Tuscarora War.* "Booklet," v. 2.

Beaufort County, besides being in the hottest of the trouble, and consequently one of the heaviest sufferers, was one of the sections of the State which did all it could to quell the savage butchery of the whites by the Indians. Beaufort also furnished her full share of the recruits who were with Moore at Nahucke when the Tuscarora power was broken, for it was the most thickly settled portion of the colony besides the Albemarle sections, and, unlike this section, it did not have very many Quakers to object to the war. Thus the part we played in this first struggle for existence was as great in proportion as the part the Beaufort County boys played in the struggle for freedom from England and in the struggle for our rights during the Civil War.

THE TOWNS OF COLONIAL BEAUFORT COUNTY.

It has long been one of our boasts that Beaufort County contains the oldest incorporated town in the State; all of us know that Bath enjoys this distinction. Its history dates almost as far back as does the history of the county itself. The streets and the houses of the quaint old town seem to transport us back into the long-past, much-storied years in which North Carolina was a British colony, and when Bath was as large as any other town within the limits of the colony.

"Sixteen miles from what is now the town of Washington," says Mr. W. L. Peele,[14] "and within the limits of what is now Beaufort County, the [Pamlico] river widens out into an arm of the Pamlico Sound some five or six miles from shore to shore, and sends northward a short estuary into which flows Bath Creek, known among the early settlers as 'Old Town Creek,' and also as Pampticough Creek. In 1696 the homes of the settlers, as they increased in numbers, converged toward a central village situated on the east bank of this creek, about a mile and a half from its mouth. First the settlement and afterwards the village was called Pampticough. In 1681 a 'plantation or plot of ground containing twelve thousand acres, more or less,' was conveyed to Seth Sothel.

[14]Notes on Bath, North Carolina Day Program, 1914.

This plantation included the village then 'commonly called Pampticough Town.' "

This was a description of the town before its incorporation. It is certain that the town was incorporated in 1705, and that its name was then changed from Pampticough to Bath. This first act of incorporation dates from the 8th of March, 1705.[15] The corporate limits of the town embraced sixty acres. This act of 1705 has been lost, but a quotation from the act of 1715, which repeated a part of the original act, is as follows: "Whereas, at the request of Mr. John Lawson, Mr. Joel Martin and others, a certain tract of land purchased by themselves, lying in [on] the Old Town Creek in Pampticough, and containing by estimation sixty acres, * * * being part of a large tract then belonging to one David Perkins, but now in the tenure and possession and belonging to Col. Thomas Cary, * * * was incorporated and made a township by an act of the General Assembly, made and ratified at the house of Captain John Hacklefield, the 8th day of March, 1705, * * * be it enacted by his Excellency, the Palatine, and the rest of the True and Absolute Lords Proprietors of Carolina, by and with the advice and consent of this Present General Assembly, * * * and by the authority of the same, that the said land be and is hereby henceforward invested in Mr. John Porter, Mr. Joel Martin, Mr. Thomas Harding, and Capt. John Drinkwater, or any two of them, to and for the use aforesaid and declared and confessed, and incorporated into a township by the name of Bath Town, with all the privileges and immunities hereafter expressed."[16] These privileges and immunities were of a municipal nature, and aside from the provision for the erection of a courthouse, they were similar to the affairs settled by the municipal authorities or the townsmen of today. A part of this same act of 1705 is taken up with an enactment for the preservation and best use of the Bath Library.

This Bath Library was the gift of the Reverend Thomas Bray, philanthropist and founder of the Corporation for the Establishing of the Christian Religion. It was the first library ever seen in the limits of North Carolina, and was valued at 100 pounds. Be-

[15] *S. R.*, XXIII, 73.
[16] *Ibid.*

fore the incorporation of Bath, the library had traveled up and down the county, and had apparently been abused and a part of the volumes misplaced, judging from the tenor of the act for the regulation of the library. The men appointed as trustees of the library were the most influential men of the county, showing that even if a greater part of the people were indifferent toward the library and unappreciate of the benefits to accrue from its use, the people in charge of governmental affairs, and the higher classes generally, were not irresponsive to the appeals of culture and learning. What finally became of the Bath Library is not definitely known.

Bath was soon made a port of entry and the seat of government.[17] Its being made a port of entry was the result of the growing trade of Bath, which in turn was due to the depth of water in Ocracoke Inlet, which was greater than most of the shallow inlets on our coast. Bath was more centrally located than Edenton, but it was still inconveniently located for the settlers along the Cape Fear, and for this reason the seat of government did not remain long in our quaint little town. Governor Eden lived there in 1714; Christopher Gale had lived there since about 1710; Teach had had a house just across the creek, almost fronting the palace of the proprietary governor. Near the apex of the rising ground on which Bath is built, on what was once the land of Joseph Bonner, there can be seen the remains of the fort to which the inhabitants of the surrounding country fled on the outbreak of the Indian massacre of 1711. Owing to its trade, Bath began to be a flourishing town about 1725. It was located on the road running from Nansemond River, in Virginia, by the way of Edenton, Mackey's Point, Plymouth, Bath, and New Bern, to Wilmington. Thus it was in touch with Virginia and the southern colonists by land as well as by water.[18]

In 1734 St. Thomas Church, the oldest original religious edifice in the State, was completed. It is a quaint building, a little above one story in height, not having a steeple. It is built with thick walls, despite the fact that the bricks in the walls, as well as the tiles of the floor, were brought from England. There is a story

[17] *C. R.*, III, xviii.
[18] *Ibid.*

that the bell of the church, though it has been cracked and recast, was the gift of Queen Anne, and though I cannot find a record to prove this, it is safe to suppose that it may have been given by the English queen. However irresponsive a person may be to the appeal of the past, he can hardly see and enter and walk down the same aisles that were trod by the quaintly costumed people of two centuries ago; he can hardly read the inscriptions cut in the slabs let into the walls of the old church and not feel that he has been transported into the bygone days of colonial Beaufort County, and not feel a realization, an inspiration and a thankfulness to our forefathers for their inestimable services as pioneers.

Situated on the principal street of Bath today is perhaps the oddest house in the whole county. It is known as the old Marsh House, though the Marshes were not the original owners. It was built in 1744 by Monsieur Catauneh for a Mr. and Mrs. Whitemore.[19] The Whitemores had a niece, it is related, one Mary Evans, whose husband was lost at sea. This niece, according to a curiously carved tombstone still to be seen in the rear of the old house, died with a broken heart on account of the loss of her husband. However this may be, the Whitemores moved away, many thinking that their leaving was due to their grief, so closely were they attached to Mrs. Evans. Thus the house passed from the hands of its original owners, being purchased by a Mr. Marsh, a wealthy ship-owner and merchant of the town, whose descendants still own the place. The chief peculiarity of construction of the house is the chimney, seventeen feet wide, with windows and tiled floors in it. Evidently the building of a chimney was not then the item in house construction that it is today. The house is frame, of course, and the sills have been found to be pitch pine heart covered with tar and wrapped in canvas—merely another example of how substantially our forefathers built. There are numerous other places of interest at Bath, particularly the sight of two old cannon, visible only at low tide, lying buried in the mud at the edge of the water—the harmless rusty memorials of the days when Bath had a fort, or of the advent and passing of that bold buccaneer, Edward Teach, more commonly known as "Black Beard."

[19]Rodman, *Historic Homes and People of Old Bath Town.* "Booklet," v. 2.

Bath was the seat of government of Bath County until the county ceased to exist, when it became the seat of government of Beaufort, remaining the county seat until the removal of the government to the present seat, Washington, in 1785. The courthouse, jail, and pillory, which had been built in accordance with the act of 1715, used all to stand at Bath. They were removed upon the petition of a majority of the citizens of the county, for Washington was already outstripping Bath in its progress. Court was early held at Bath; Christopher Gale, Chief Justice of the county, held court there as early as March 31, 1713.[29] Other courts, other court officers, and other men came and acted their parts and passed off the stage whereon was acted the drama of the history of Bath Town. No other place in North Carolina is quite so romantic, so antique, as dear old Bath, for even if Mr. Whitefield did curse it, as the report goes, we all cherish its sacred history, and still hope for a bright future for this village of less than 500 souls which, notwithstanding, holds the honor of being the first incorporated town in North Carolina.

Washington, the present county seat of Beaufort County, and a growing town of 6,211 persons by the census of 1910, has a history that dates back almost to the Indian troubles of 1711. It was in this year that a fort and garrison was placed on the estate of Mr. Lionel Reading, and was called Fort Reading. Though Fort Reading was on the south side of the river, it may properly be said to have been the beginning of Washington. Little mention of the place is made between the years 1715 and 1775. In 1726 a grant of land was made to Christopher Dudley conveying 337 acres of land, on a part of which Washington now stands, to Mr. Dudley. In 1727 Dudley transferred this tract to Edward Salter, who in turn conveyed it to John Worley. Worley deeded the land to Thomas Bonner in 1729, describing the tract as "the plantation whereon I now dwell." Thomas Bonner lived on this plantation, and at his death, Colonel James Bonner, of Revolutionary renown, came into possession of the estate. It was James Bonner who laid out the streets and lots of the town of Washington in 1776, selling the lots by lottery, and conveying the streets, to-

[29] *C. R.*, II, 80.

gether with lots No. 21, on which was to be erected a courthouse, jail and pillory, and No. 50, which St. Peter's Church now occupies, to the public generally.[21] In the corner of the churchyard on Main Street may be seen the tomb of Colonel James Bonner, once the owner of all the land on which Washington is built, and the selector of the site of the town.

This town has the honor of being the first place named in honor of George Washington. From the journal of the Council of Safety of North Carolina, in session at Halifax, September 27, 1776, we quote as follows: "Resolved that Captain John Forster, commander of the armed brig, the 'General Washington,' now lying at Washington, do proceed with all possible dispatch to Ocracoke Bar, and to remain within the said bar in order to protect the trading vessels which may be coming into or going out of that port, until one of the aforesaid armed vessels [the 'King Tammany' and the 'Pennsylvania Farmer'] shall return there, or shall be otherwise ordered.[22] Thus we see that Washington was fast becoming a small town; that the harbor could accommodate small armed vessels, which were of greater draft than merchantmen, and that its name had been generally recognized as Washington by the year 1776, where our colonial observations cease as far as this paper is concerned. Washington's greatest growth, unlike Bath, was during the period following the Revolution and even after the Civil War, and therefore its richest history is not included in a colonial retrospection. The names of Blount, Bonner, Brown, Gladden, Telfair, Reading, Respess, Van Norden and others are connected with the pre-Revolutionary as well as the post-Revolutionary history of Washington, and these names have, for the most part, been commemorated by having streets of Washington named in their honor.

Chocowinity, a small town on the south side of the river, about three miles from Washington, was begun in colonial times. It was probably a small hamlet in 1745, for it is mentioned in the act for the division of Beaufort County for the better maintenance and construction of the public roads.[23] The name is a very musi-

[21]Rodman, *Washington and Its Early Inhabitants.* North Carolina Day Program, 1914.
[22]*C. R.*, X, 877.
[23]*S. R.*, XXIII, 222.

cal Indian name, the meaning of which I have been unable to find out. Chocowinity was on the frontier when the Indians surprised the white settlements on the morning of September 22, 1711. Tradition has it that the first house to be fired was the one owned by John Porter at Chocowinity.[24] Chocowinity has never attained to any size, being still a mere village. It had less chance to grow because of commercial reasons than did Bath, for it is situated a short distance from the head of Chocowinity Bay, an arm of Pamlico River. The town is best known on account of the fact that for a long time it was the location of a good secondary school established and maintained by the Episcopal Church.

Of these three colonial towns which we have discussed, Bath, Washington, and Chocowinity, Bath was the largest until after the Revolution. It was the center of social life, of commercial activity, and of civil government in the county. It had the best location, for "on either side of the bay the land, covered with a promiscuous growth of trees, slopes gently down to the water's edge, and this beautiful sheet of water is frequently, early in the day, as smooth as glass, upon the shining surface of which appears painted the trees, with the delicate, tender greens of spring-time or the deeper tints of summer, or, more beautiful still, the gorgeous reds, yellows, and greens of the autumn tide."[25] It had the start over both Washington and Chocowinity, and it is really difficult to see why Bath is not the city today and Washington merely a town. They all three remain, and other towns have sprung up in the county, but even if they can outstrip their older rivals commercially, they cannot deprive them of the heritage of a past history.

RELIGION AND CHURCHES IN THE COUNTY.

Despite the fact that the early settlers of Beaufort County had trouble enough in an economic and social way, they also had to contend with trouble from their religion, or, more correctly, in a majority of cases, because of their lack of religion. The men

[24]Grimes, *Notes on Colonial North Carolina.* "Booklet," v. 5.
[25]Peele, *Notes on Bath.* North Carolina Day Program, 1904.

who were the settlers in early Beaufort County were men like those to be found on the frontiers today—pioneers of civilization; men with small means, especially pecuniary means; men possessed of large hearts and a good will; courageous, restless, and independent, but, despite all this, not essentially religious persons, and generally careless in the observance of the outward forms of religion. They came and settled and would have governed themselves, had they been permitted to do so, in peace, but the burdens of the early colonists were greatly augmented by the advent of the proprietary governors and their acts to make the Church of England the established church in the colony.

Prior to the Vestry Act of 1701 the settlers in the present county of Beaufort had no ministers, not coming in great bodies as did the Puritans, or the Quakers, or the Huguenots, who settled farther south. They moved into the wildernesses, staked their claims, and began to clear away the trees, often without regard for the proximity of a neighbor. If the settler throve, he was usually influenced and aided by his wife, who ordinarily was of a finer temperament religiously than her consort. They probably worshiped God in their own way, attributing to Him their blessings and their prosperity. If the Indians were a menace, if the crops were bad, if fever and pestilence thinned the numbers of the little settlement, then there is no telling to what a level the spiritual life of these pioneers may have ebbed. Certain we are that the great majority of them were not very religious, not having any pastor to put before them the duties and necessities of living a religious life. Religion was, however, a very important thing for a man to be without in 1665, when Yemans was governor of the settlements along the Cape Fear, for if he was not a professed believer in some religion or another, he was not recognized by the government, nor was he allowed to hold lands. Locke, in his Fundamental Constitution,[26] emphasized the necessity of professing some religion, though appearing to be liberal toward Dissenters. Section 96, however, of this Fundamental Constitution, reads in part: "As the country comes to be sufficiently planted, and distributed into fit divisions, it shall belong to the parliament to take

[26] *C. R.*, I, 187-207.

care of the building of churches, and the public maintenance of divines, to be employed in the exercise of religion, *according to the Church of England.*"

I quote this passage purposely, and underscore the last phrase particularly, because it illustrates the spirit of the Proprietors. They were willing enough to have Dissenters settle here in order that they might bring wealth into their pockets, but they were ready to force them to support the Church of England after having made such highly-puffed claims of religious toleration. It is not to be supposed that the settlers of the Pamlico region were religious refugees, for this they were not. They were mostly people who came for economic reasons to search for better land, or more hospitable climate, or more favorable terms of settlement. Therefore, the very reasons which led the earlier settlers to the banks of the Pamlico River were against the early and rapid growth of religious ideas. Still those in power, either through personal interest or impelled by the outside power to which they were responsible, early took steps to establish the Anglican or Church of England as the recognized and only duly authorized church, as we shall now see.

In the vestry measures of 1701, the only parish named in what was then Bath County was the parish of Pampticough. This parish comprised the settlements along the banks of the Pamlico River, and was established in order to accommodate the people of Bath Town. This continued to be the parish of Pampticough for the space of about fifteen years. The ministers of the gospel who preached during these years were sent over either by the Church of England or by the Society for Propagating the Gospel, an organization in England for the purpose of evangelizing her colonies, both in the New World and elsewhere. The first of these ministers was one Daniel Brett, who arrived some time in 1701 or 1702. He was not a conscientious laborer, and his character was odious, judging from contemporary estimates made of him. He was a member of the Church party, of course, and his character brought only contempt for the Church and religion in general. But the Church party never ceased to labor for the establishment and firm entrenchment of the Established Church in the growing

colony. In 1704 the authorities advanced a step, and, under Governor Daniel, they passed a law that deprived every person of the power to hold office of trust, honor, or profit who was not a communicant in the Anglican Church.

In the years between 1704 and 1711 three men were sent to preach to the colonists. I mention all these, as I mentioned the first, because they all preached in Pampticough Precinct, which comprised a great part of Beaufort County of today. These men were Messrs. Blair, Gordon, and Adams. Mr. Blair baptized about a hundred children. He it was who tells us that there were four classes of persons within the colony, to wit: "First, the Quakers, who were the most powerful enemies to the Church Government, but a people very ignorant of what they profess. The second sort are a great many who have no religion, but would be Quakers if by that they were not obliged to lead a more moral life than they are willing to comply to. A third sort are something like Presbyterians, which sort is upheld by some idle fellows who have left their lawful employment and preach and baptize throughout the country without any manner of order from any sect or pretended church. A fourth sort, which is really zealous for the interests of the church, are fewer in number, but the better sort of people, and would do very much for the settlement of the Church Government there, if not opposed to these precedent sects."[27]

These three men, namely, Messrs. Blair, Gordon, and Adams, were much better ministers than Brett or than Urmstone, who followed Adams. Urmstone, though not sent out by the Society for Propagating the Gospel, was, like so many Englishmen both before him and after him, merely a rector in order to make a living; in other words he was preaching merely for the living there was in it.[28] He was, as Dr. Hawks says, unamiable in disposition and covetous also. He was, judging from the letters written to the Secretary of the S. P. G., one of the most chronic complainers that ever struck these colonies. And yet he remained here, drew his salary, was waited on by his own slaves, and ate the best his parishoners could give him for sixteen years!

It was during Urmstone's stay here as missionary that Pampti-

[27] *History of the Baptists in North Carolina*, p. 6.
[28] This is Dr. Hawks' opinion of him. *History of North Carolina*, v. 1.

cough Parish was made into St. Thomas Parish, Hyde Parish, and Craven Parish. This was done by an act[29] passed by the General Assembly bearing the date 1715, which reads in part as follows: "It is hereby enacted that this province of North Carolina be divided into parishes according to the Divisions and precincts hereinafter mentioned, that is to say * * * Perquimans, Currituck and Hyde, to be parishes & bounded by the limits of the several precincts: the Remaining part of Pamlico river, and the branches thereof, commonly called Beaufort precinct, to be one parish by the name of St. Thomas parish." Here we see the name first lawfully recognized, by which the same parish is known today. Vestrymen were appointed for the various parishes. Those named for St. Thomas parish being

The Honorable Chas. Eden, Esq.,	Capt. Jno. Drinkwater,
Tobias Knight, Esq.,	Capt. Jno. Clark,
Col. Christopher Gale,	Mr. John Adams,
Mr. John Porter,	Mr. Patrick Maule,
Daniel Richardson, Esq.,	Mr. Thos. Harding,
Mr. Thomas Worsley,	Mr. Jno. Lillington.

Bath was the common meeting place for the religious gatherings in the parish. It was the only town in the parish, and it was easily accessible by water for all those who had any desire to attend. No church was as yet built, though provision had been made in the act incorporating Bath Town for a suitable lot on which to build a church. Some twenty years later, however, a church was finished, externally at least, for, in 1734, the present old St. Thomas Church, of which Bath is so proud, was completed. It was built of small, well-made brick brought from England, and the floor was likewise made of tiles. The same floor remains today. It was arranged inside as most of the churches in that day were arranged—two rows of pews with the aisles leading down each side and the middle of the church. It is very neatly furnished now, and with its old inscriptions of the faithful few whose bones lie buried under the chancel, it is one of the curiosities of the quaint old town of Bath.

The Act of 1701, and the select vestries appointed by it, though

[29] *S. R.*, XXIII, 6.

it did not materially concern the scattered settlers along the Pamlico, continued in effect until the act of March 12, 1710-11, which appointed new vestries in all the parishes. The Act of 1711 was not radically different from the Act of 1701, though it was fully as intolerant toward the Quakers and the few Baptists then found here. The Act of 1715 supplanted the Act of 1711, and continued in effect until it was repealed by the vestry act of 1741. This act[30] was the most extensive act yet passed in reference to the Church. It gave the Church almost as much power over the people as the Colonial Government had. It gave the Church the power to levy poll taxes as large as it saw fit; it gave the wardens and vestry complete control over all church moneys; and it also gave these men the power to assess or levy any taxes they deemed necessary "for building a church, chappel, or chappels; to purchase lands for a Glebe, to erect convenient buildings thereon, and to keep the aforesaid Edifices in repair."[31] The wardens and vestry could also have taxed the people for the purchase of books, ornaments for the church or necessities of public worship, and have been justified by this law in so doing.

The people of Beaufort County must have been of a different type, generally speaking, from the majority of people who settled other Eastern North Carolina counties. We do know they did not come to escape religious persecution; we know further that they were of English origin, and that the majority of them must have been warmly attached to the principles of the Church of England. We make these statements because we are able to find no registered complaints from the people of Beaufort against the excessive taxes for the support of the Church. Their general interest in matters of religion is further attested to by the fact that the people of St. Thomas parish in Beaufort County were the only people who ever owned their three hundred acres of glebe land, or a glebe house. These were acquired in the ministry of Rev. Mr. Garzia, who became the minister of St. Thomas parish about 1735. He was a zealot, and was well beloved by the people. He died November 29, 1744, as a result of a fall from his horse while he was returning from visiting a sick parishioner.

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[30] *S. R.*, XXIII, 187-191.
[31] *Ibid.*

The next really great man who was connected with St. Thomas Church in the capacity of its minister was the Reverend Alexander Stewart, who came from England in 1753 as the special agent of the Society for Propagating the Gospel, as well as being the minister of St. Thomas Church. Until the spring of 1771, nearly as far as we are concerned, he worked faithfully among the people of Beaufort, Hyde, and Pitt counties, serving thirteen chapels besides his parish church.[32] He helped in the education of the youth of Beaufort County, and he often supplied school children with necessary books. The church at Bath received its finishing touches in 1762, not having been quite completed in 1734. He suffered much on account of sickness during the later part of his life, though he was never the complainer that many of his predecessors sent out by the S. P. G. were. His letters to the Society were sane, sincere, and accurate. He influenced two men to become candidates for Holy Orders. These were Mr. Peter Blinn and Mr. Nathaniel Blount, who both rendered a good service to the people a little later.

For a very few more years after Mr. Stewart's death the Established Church continued to be supported by all the tithables, whether church members or not. Mr. Stewart gave in 1767 the number of taxable persons in St. Thomas parish as 110.[33] Thus we see that the numbers in St. Thomas parish had grown immensely from the time when, in 1711, there were about a dozen houses in the town of Bath. And yet, the church as an establishment of the State ceased to exist forever upon the outbreak of the War of the Revolution. In many places the church was a menace to great numbers, but in Beaufort County the church was a blessing.

There were probably a few persons in the county who were Quakers. These people were to be found pretty generally through the eastern part of the State. There were also a few Baptists in all probability, for the Baptists, at a later date, were unusually active immediately to the north and west of us. But, as a whole, we may say that the colonial inhabitants of Beaufort County were staunch adherents to the principles advocated and taught them by the Established Church.

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[32]De Rossett, *Church History of North Carolina*, p. 73.
[33]*C. R.*, VII, 145.

COMMERCE IN THE COUNTY.

It would seem that when a colony is planted in a foreign and uncultivated country, that commerce and intercourse with the mother country and other foreign countries would be extensive and prosperous. But such is not always the case even today; and in the latter quarter of the seventeenth century, when the first settlements were made along Pamlico and Albemarle sounds, it was even less true than it is now. When many of the settlers landed in the forests of Carolina their relations with the mother country and the outside world practically ceased. They always came well supplied with tools and implements and household utensils, and, owing to the abundance of the game afforded by the forests and rivers, together with the results of their thrifty husbandry, it was very easy to get along without too much dependence being placed upon the products of the mother country. Of course, even in the earliest days, powder and arms and new tools and some other articles of absolute necessity to life, such as salt and medicines, had to be imported.

Owing to the fact that some of the settlers of our part of the State came both from Virginia and the New England colonies, the earliest commercial relations established were between the new settlers of the Albemarle and Bath counties and the two sections mentioned above. Most of the necessary articles were got through the Virginia merchants, or through the New England traders. These merchants bartered their wares in exchange for the products of the colonists, money being almost unknown. The price of any article was stated to be so and so many pounds of tobacco, or indigo, or so and so many bushels of corn or wheat. The salt meat of the colony, both beef and pork, was very excellent, and this was largely exported, through the agency of the thrifty New England shipmen, to the West India Islands, where it was exchanged for sugar, cocoa, and molasses.

In 1707, Robert Holden, who had been Collector of Customs in Albemarle as far back as 1679, writing to the Lords Proprietors about North Carolina, says: "It has barred Inlets into It; which spoyles the trade of it and none but small vessels from New Eng-

land and Bermudas trades there. The soil is more lusty than South Carolina. It produceth Tobacco; Indian Corne; English Wheat in abundance; Beef, Pork, hides, Tarr, and so consequently pitch, and furs as Beaver: Otter: Fox and Wild Cat skins, deare skins; Tanned Lether, Tallow," etc.[34] This list is protracted still further, but this is enough to give us a general idea of the articles in which our commerce consisted, even as early as the first decade of the eighteenth century. Thus we see that despite the fact that the colonists *could* get along with but little outside aid, they, notwithstanding, very soon began to export their products to outside markets.

Beaufort County was not behind the other counties in beginning commercial relations with other colonies and other countries. Bath was incorporated in 1705, because it was then one of the most flourishing towns in the State, and its growth was due to its commerce, which in turn was traceable to the comparatively good harbor of the town. An early chronicler[35] describes Bath as being "not the unpleasantest part of the country,—nay in all probability it will become the centre of trade, as having the advantages of a better inlet for shipping and surrounded with most pleasant savannas, very useful for stocks of cattle. In this, as in all other parts of the province, there is no money; everyone buys and pays with their commodities, the difference of their money being as one to three." [36] The harbor of Bath is not very deep, but considering the fact that the vessels of those times did not draw much water, it was sufficiently good for Bath to be a thriving town as the result of its commerce, especially between the years 1755-1775. We know that no great amount of commerce was shipped from or received at Bath prior to 1715, for in this year the town was made a port of entry, and that a collector of customs was not appointed for the town until a few years afterward.

Lawson, in his geographical history of North Carolina, writing about 1709 (he was cruelly put to death by the Indians in 1711), says, having just remarked upon the great plenty in the province: "Thus our merchants are not many, nor have those few there be

[34] *C. R.*, II, xiv.
[35] William Gordon, ex-missionary to Carolina.
[36] *C. R.*, I, 715.

applied themselves to the European trade. The planter sits contentedly at home, whilst his oxen thrive and grow fat, and his stocks daily increase: the fatted porkets and poultry are easily raised to his table, and his orchard affords him liquor, so that he eats and drinks away the cares of the world, and desires no greater happiness than that which he daily enjoys. Whereas, not only the European, but also the Indian trade, might be carried on to a great profit, because we lie as fairly for the body of Indians as any settlement in English America; and for the small trade that has been carried on in that way, the dealers therein have throve as fast as any men, and the soonest raised themselves of any people I have known in Carolina." [37] Not a bad estimate of the possibilities of intra-colonial trade, though not so favorable an estimate of early colonial plantation life! For various reasons, some of which being the poorness of harbors, the shoals, the dangers to commerce from pirates, the bad proprietary government, and the general plenty that prevailed, early commerce was a rather neglected enterprise.

Lawson also says: "Our produce for exportation to Europe and the islands in America are beef, pork, tallow, hides, deer skins, furs, pitch, tar, wheat, Indian corn, peas, masts, staves, heading, boards and all sorts of timber and lumber for Madera and the West Indies, rosin, turpentine and several sorts of gums and tars, with some medicinal drugs, are here produced; besides rice and several other foreign grains, which thrive well." Most of these articles mentioned by Lawson continued to be exported, for in 1765, in the Memorial of the Merchants, Traders and Planters, we find mentioned pitch, tar, turpentine, masts, yards and bowsprits, which the colonists prayed to be allowed to ship to Ireland, Spain and Portugal, and to the Streights. The petition further says that "Beef, pork, rice, indigo, naval stores, corn, lumber and hides could be sold to advantage outside Britain." [38]

As the county increased in population and wealth, several of the merchants and larger planters of the county built ships and found that commerce between Bath and other Eastern Carolina ports was profitable, for the tax of one pound of powder and four

[37] Lawson, *History of North Carolina*, pp. 146, 147.
[38] *C. R.*, V, 322.

pounds of swan shot for "every three tons measure" of the vessel by the Statute of 1715 (Chapter XXXV),[39] and of one quarter pound of powder and one pound of shot or lead for each ton, according to the Statute of 1754 (Chapter VI),[40] was not levied on vessels owned or built by any resident person of the colony. The favor granted to home-built and home-owned ships was evidently granted in order to aid the building up of a more prosperous foreign trade. These laws and acts had a wholesome effect, for they, together with the excellent facilities which the forests and the waterways of our section of the State then and now offer to shipbuilding, caused the colonists of Beaufort and other counties to have a pretty fair sized colonial merchant marine at the time of the outbreak of the Revolution. This is proved by the attention paid to the importance of not shipping any necessities out of the province, either in home or foreign bottoms, during the Revolution.

The colonial commerce of Beaufort County, then, considering the fact that it is situated on a broad, navigable river, and that it contains the town of Bath, one of the earliest ports of entry, was, despite the fact that all commerce in the colony was very small until about the middle of the eighteenth century, a rather important industry in the county. It was the sole means of the people's exchanging their products for money. It was the way in which the people kept in touch with the outside world. It was the method used to obtain the few luxuries of life that were used in the county in pre-Revolutionary times. Altogether, it was an important influence in the life of colonial Beaufort County; it was one of the greatest influences for good in the county, and it was the means of making the fortunes and names of several families whose descendants now live among us.

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[39] *S. R.*, XXIII, 45-46.
[40] *Ibid.*, p. 401.

PIRACY IN THE COUNTY.

In any discussion of Colonial Beaufort County, when we have touched upon the commerce and trade of pre-Revolutionary times, we cannot pass the subject of piracy silently by. The commerce of the colony, together with the geographical features of the eastern part of North Carolina, and our nearness to the Bermudas and the West Indies as a whole, made the ports on the sounds and on the Cape Fear, Neuse, and Pamlico rivers, particularly, very inviting to that nest of pirates which infested the West India Islands during the latter part of the seventeenth and the beginning of the eighteenth centuries.

When we speak of pirates and piracy in this modern age it is as if we were transported into a second age of semi-barbarous lawlessness and adventure, so marvelous and far off does this sea highway robbery seem. But, nevertheless, about the time the early settlers around Bath and other places along the Pamlico were struggling to found their homes, there was a government of pirates among the coral islands off the southeast coast of the United States which had already reached its "golden age," and which was about to be disbanded. The breaking up of this "government" was due to both troubles among themselves and trouble as a result of the effective energy of the King's fleets. With Henry Morgan, Captain Kidd, Hornigold, or Vane, real kings of desperadoes, we will not concern ourselves, for these never made any depredations on the sounds of the Eastern Carolina coast of which we have record, but Edward Teach, or "Black Beard," as he is commonly known in the legends which we still hear concerning his bold and lawless deeds in and near Bath, and Major Steed Bonnett are of particular interest to us who are lovers of colonial history.

Edward Thack or Thatch or Teach, as his surname is variously spelled, was a disciple of the noted Hornigold, and though he made his headquarters at New Providence in the Bahamas, during the earlier part of his career, he it was who a little later so completely held the people of Bath and the surrounding settlements along the banks of the Pamlico at his mercy. He made his

headquarters in the latter part of his career almost entirely on the waters of Pamlico and Albemarle sounds.

Teach was composed of the stuff necessary to make a successful pirate. He was a large, dark man physically; his will was as strong as his physique. He was passionate to the extreme; he caroused and ate and drank as hard and as heartily as the famous robber barons of mediæval Europe. He was fond of luxuries, and despite his fierce mien, due to a superabundance of long black whiskers, from which he derived his nickname, Black Beard, he was amiable to women generally.[41] In keeping with his nature, he had some eight or more wives, a state of matrimony only equaled in modern times by wealthy Mohammedans and by exceptional cases among the Mormons. Teach's unlawful method of gaining a living was thus in perfect accord with his general temperament.

The depredations of the pirates of the Bahamas became such frequent and serious affairs that it was necessary for something to be done to suppress their general lawlessness. The commerce of the Bath, Albemarle, Archdale, and Clarendon counties with Virginia and with the New England colonies was a growing one. The cargoes which these colonial merchantmen carried were often very valuable, and were consequently the coveted objects of many a piratical eye, since not only French and Spanish ships were molested, but also the merchantmen of the colonies or the mother country itself. So troublesome had these pirates made themselves, and so risky had commerce become, that it became necessary for the King to issue a general pardon to all those who had been engaged in piratical depredations, and who would, within one year, surrender themselves and take an oath not to engage in this unlawful enterprise again. Many of these pirates acceded to the terms of the pardon, gave up this illegal method of living, and became planters and good citizens in several of the colonies.[42]

Teach also pretended to agree to the generous terms of the proclamation of Charles II., and he accordingly settled at Bath. His resolutions (if he ever made any) were soon broken; the thrilling sensations of a chase, a few broadsides, a hand-to-hand

[41] Ashe, *Our Own Pirates*. "Booklet," v. 2.
[42] *Ibid.*

struggle,—and then the grim satisfaction of having his unfortunate enemies walk the plank proved too much for his wild and bloody nature. In November of the same year he set sail from Bath and began all his freebooting anew. He sailed the seas, armed both ship and crew, and his name became a terror to every mariner. His ship was of the kind which had clean heels, and he could chase, strike, plunder, and sink or burn a ship and slip away again before he could be taken. The commerce of the Carolina colonies almost ceased to exist, and Charles, in desperation, sent some of the most skillful English officers to put an end to a part of the buccaneering of the Bermuda outlaws. These loyal seamen of Charles II. succeeded in capturing some of the robbers, but not Teach nor Major Bonnett, who had become Black Beard's running mate, since these two bold buccaneers were off on a cruise at the time their headquarters were taken.

Exulting in his having escaped, and conscious of his own strength and the fleetness of his ships, Teach, together with Bonnett, sailed the seas, becoming more of a terror than ever. He established anew the old order of the buccaneers, and, because of his bravery and daring, he became their leader. The commerce of our colony, though it was necessarily small, was paralyzed, and the trade of South Carolina with other colonies or with the mother country was also broken up. The King sent Sir Woods Rogers to drive these pirates off the seas. He captured all of those he found at Providence with the exception of Vane, Bonnett, and Black Beard, who were away on a cruise, and thus escaped capture. But luck was not always with Teach, for, upon repairing to the coast of North Carolina, two of his ships, his flagship and another sloop, were wrecked at Topsail Inlet in June, 1717.

As a result of this misfortune some of his crew deserted him, going to the middle colonies, settling, and becoming good citizens. This gave Teach another opportunity to take advantage of a second pardon, which he was to have received from the King upon his surrendering at Bath. Teach, however, was only pretending to reform, for he again took to piracy after a short rest. On his outward voyage he captured two French merchantmen loaded with the products of semi-tropical countries, part of which con-

sisted of chocolate, sweetmeats, loaf sugar, and other commodities.[43] These ships he took, and on the night of the 13th or 14th[44] of September he entered Ocracoke Inlet and proceeded to place his booty in as safe a place as possible, leaving a part of it at the plantation of Tobias Knight at Bath. Whether these goods were known by Knight or Governor Eden to have been taken through piracy or not is not certain,[45] though the people evidently suspected Teach. He had robbed a perianger of William Bell, a merchant of Pasquotank, in the Pamlico River on the night of the 14th of September, and had taken over seventy-five pounds in money and goods.

It is the common people—the populace at large—who suffer most when any outrage is committed, and it is they who finally rise up in their might and either personally or through their agents make their own restitution. The people sent a complaint to the Governor of Virginia, Spotswood, and a petition for aid sufficient to rid the colony of this pest of a pirate. Spotswood acted with great secrecy, and, securing two officers, Lieutenant Maynard and Captain Brand, from His Majesty's ships the "Lyme" and the "Pearl," which were then lying in Chesapeake Bay, he gave them command over two well-armed and equipped sloops of war. They sailed for Ocracoke on the 17th of November, coming into Ocracoke Inlet on the evening of the 21st. They found Black Beard on the inside of the bar, and, anchoring, they prepared to pass the night, having the treacherous Teach bottled up in Pamlico Sound.[46]

The next morning found both Maynard and Teach ready for a deadly combat. The ships maneuvered, each trying to obtain the advantage of the other, and here it seems as if the pirates held the advantage, for they were familiar with the bars and shoals, whereas the attacking vessels had to feel their way, so to speak. Soon one of Maynard's ships grounded, and a broadside from Teach killed or wounded some twenty of his crew. But the brave lieutenant had come there either to take Teach or to be killed in the attempt; he did the former. After a series of maneuvers,

[43] *C. R.*, II, 342.
[44] *Ibid.*
[45] *Ibid.*, 341-349.
[46] Ashe, *Our Own Pirates*. "Booklet," v. 2.

and a hand-to-hand struggle, the pirates were taken, only after Black Beard had fallen, faint and mortally wounded. There is one story that says Teach's head was cut off and was affixed to the bowsprit of Maynard's ship as she sailed into Bath Creek. Certain it is, however, that the pirates were taken; that their plunder was carried to Virginia and sold at auction by the government upon the recommendation and testimony of Captain Brand, the confiscated goods bringing the large sum of 2,238 pounds; and that the commerce of the colonies again began to flow along at its normal pulse.[47]

In the narrative of the story of the capture of Teach, Maynard is probably due most of the credit. His vessel remained clear, unlike that of Brand, which grounded. It is well to note that Maynard was responsible to Captain Brand, who was commander-in-chief of the two sloops.[48] It is also to be noted that Major Steed Bonnett was not at hand when Teach was taken, but that he continued his life of a sea-marauder until he was finally captured and hanged in Charleston by Colonel William Rhett. Thus passed two pirates whose daring and bloodiness and whose intimate knowledge of and interest in our county form remarkable contrasts to our knowledge of present-day life on and around Pamlico and Albemarle sounds.

These pirates were products of their times, just as we today are products of the times in which we live. They often began with good intentions, and lived within the law, for they usually had permits to prey upon the commerce of France and Spain, who were in those times almost continually at war with England. But when French or Spanish merchantmen were scarce, it was too great a temptation to many of these buccaneers to allow a richly laden vessel flying the English flag to pass unmolested. When they had once broken the law it was the next and only logical step to become a pirate, as a great many of these commissioned privateers did.

Piracy, even, was not regarded as such a dreadful crime except by the unfortunate shipowners or ship crews who suffered as a result of their depredations. Pirates often received favor from

[47] *C. R.*, II, 334.
[48] *Ibid.*, 322.

high officials in the Colonial Government; respect was almost universally accorded them. It appeared after the capture of Teach that both Governor Charles Eden and Tobias Knight, the secretary of the Council, must have been aware of the real nature of the life and business of this pirate.[49] Knight was caused to appear before the Governor and his council, and, though he did apparently clear himself, he was never secretary again, dying a month or so afterwards.

SOCIAL LIFE IN THE COUNTY.

Early social life in Beaufort County, as well as in all other counties of the colony, was hardly worthy of the name. The people were kind, and meant well, but owing to the very nature of early life in the vast wildernesses of the eastern part of the State, there was little time to be spent in merriment or diversion. There was always danger from the Indians; there was almost incessant toil for both the masters and their slaves in the clearing of the plantations, in the case of the wealthy planter, or of the small field in the case of the less opulent settlers; there was also such a sparseness of settlement that intercourse between a man and his nearest neighbors might take up the best part of a week.

About the beginning of the eighteenth century there came over what was then Bath County a change in social conditions. The county was becoming more thickly settled, and the hastily constructed huts of the first settlers began to be replaced by the forerunners, at least, of that type of southern home which is easily distinguished as the colonial mansion. Some few of these houses were constructed of brick, but the great majority of them were frame buildings, not particularly handsome structures, but commodious and possessing an aspect of quiet and dignified honesty. The life in this early colonial period was, as I have said, strictly rural, each plantation or farm being of necessity its own social center, unit, and life. Right here we are able to account for the origin of what is so widespreadly known as "true Southern hospitality." People, secluded as they were, were always glad when visi-

[49] *C. R.*, II, 341-349.

tors or travelers came their way, for human nature likes and will have the companionship of other men's society whenever it is possible to obtain it. Thus the traveler, whether stranger or friend, was a bearer of news; he was one who could break the monotony of the seclusion of early colonial farm life. Hence it was that the latch-string always hung on the outside, and hence it is that the southern colonies generally were characterized by their hospitality.

Until a comparatively late date there was but one church in our present county of Beaufort, and this was the church of St. Thomas Parish at Bath. The parish had been established long before the church was built in 1734, and the ministers were sent from England. But, aside from this, the religious life of Bath County was, like the farm life, isolated and necessarily self-contained and sustained on each farm. The head of the family always instructed his sons and his slaves in some of the fundamental principles of ethics and religion, and in the case of the wealthier planters, where there was some one who could read, passages from Holy Writ were read to the family and the assembled dependent servants, sometimes at the close of each day, but usually at least once a week. Some misguided historians, in particular one George Chalmers, a British historian, and those who have been misled as a result of following this uninformed writer, have said that the colonists "derived no benefit from the coercion of laws, or the influences of religion." [50]

Now, it has been proved beyond a doubt that these early settlers of Beaufort County were, as were all the other early colonial settlers, ardent believers in individual liberty and untrammeled religious freedom, but it is too condemnatory to say that the whole colony was essentially bad simply because they failed to support the ministers as they were expected, or to pay their tithes when money was the scarcest thing in the county. It would have been too unnatural, too radical a thing to happen for the colonists, who, either directly or somewhat indirectly (through the other colonies), came from England, to have so quickly departed from the observance of the rules of the Anglican Church, espe-

[50] Chalmers, *Political Annals of the Present United Colonies*, p. 166.

cially so when they did not come to North Carolina for religious but for economic reasons.[51] Hence, though churches were few and the parishioners at times disobedient, we may safely conclude that the Spirit among the early Beaufort County people was cherished and respected along with the Mind and the Body.

There were very few times when the people gathered together in comparatively large groups. They came to the courts and to the assemblies. They very seldom left their homes long at a time, for, if they did so, they might expect to return and find them plundered, robbed, or burned by the Indians. But on some occasions neighbors would come together to "log-rollings," by which was designated the process of cutting the primeval forests and clearing the land for tilling. Whole forests of the most beautiful long-leaf pine timber were cut and destroyed in this manner. Millions upon millions of feet of unmatchable pine lumber have been cut, rolled together by slaves and burnt, merely to get clear of it. How wasteful were our great-grandfathers, and yet they knew it not! On these occasions of neighborly aid there was a great deal of merriment, the brandy jug always being freely passed. Notwithstanding this, these log-rollings were a great factor in a social life that was otherwise very monotonous, if it was not positively dreary.

After the suppression, in 1713, of the Indian uprising of 1711, the county became more thickly settled than ever. The one great barrier to the peace and freedom of the settlers was removed when the power of the Indian tribes was broken, and the colony flourished between the years 1717 and 1735; the population of the North Carolina Colony increased from about 9,000 to about 50,000, for there were, according to McCulloh, about 40,000 *whites* then in the county.[52] In 1732, according to the estimate of Governor Burrington, the whites were "full 30,000 and the negroes about 6,000." If we are to believe Mr. McCulloh's statement concerning the number of whites, and follow the same ratio of whites to blacks as given by Burrington, then the population of 1735 was, as I have said, about 50,000 souls, especially since

[51] Raper, *Social Life in Colonial North Carolina.* "Booklet," v. 3.
[52] *C. R.*, II, xvii.

the weight of authority seems to be against the historians who place the number at a smaller figure.

The beginning of the days of peace, plenty, and prosperity marked the establishment of some of the oldest and most renowned families in Beaufort County. The Readings, the Blounts, the Bonners, the Ormonds, the Roulhacs, the Respesses, the Browns, the Barrows, the Pattons and numerous other families whose names are familiar all over the county, came and settled immediately after the Indian war of 1711, if they did not already live there. The greater part of these men were of the upper class, possessed of fine plantations and numbers of slaves, and the life they led was a gay one, despite the distance that often separated their estates. Balls were often given at these early colonial homes, where, according to tradition, "gay ladies in rich brocades trod the stately minuets with their gallant partners." The stately halls were resonant with music and the voices of the merry dancers, and the hospitable tables of the host were always laden with the choicest foods then to be had. The houses were furnished very richly; tapestry, plate, brocaded mahogany furniture and fine linen were very often imported from England. Altogether the social life in Colonial Beaufort County from 1725 to 1775 was gay and brilliant, this being true especially of the upper classes.

To summarize, then, we may say that the early colonial life of Beaufort County was a rather hard one; that for a time the most of the settlers were not planters on a large scale; that the dangers from the Indians, the troubles arising between the incompetent proprietary governors, and the pestilence of the swamps kept any great number of settlers from coming for thirty or forty years after the earliest settlements were made. We have also seen how the population, and hence the depth and expanse of social life increased after the Indian troubles were over, and after the county and colony passed from under proprietary rule to the royal government of the King. We have also seen that with the growth of the county, and Bath in particular, that social life assumed a gayer aspect among the wealthier class, and a more enjoyable and satisfying aspect as far as all the people were concerned. The outbreak of the Revolution, then, found the people of Beaufort

County a part of a rural colony, well content but ambitious, law-abiding but thoroughly infused with the ideas of liberty and independence, and, as a whole, as happy, as generous, as faithful, and as nearly independent as any section of any other of the original thirteen colonies.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES ON BEAUFORT COUNTY PERSONAGES.

Thomas Carey, 1678-1722, an owner of land in Bath Town, held several offices of public honor, profit, and trust in the colony, and was later one of the chief figures in the Carey Rebellion, as has been called the grand row that was stirred up over the governorship of North Carolina. He held offices in both North and South Carolina, being *ex officio* governor of this province from 1704 to 1710.

The only Colonial Governor who ever owned land and resided at Bath for any length of time was Charles Eden. He was Governor from 1712 until 1722, when he died. He lived at Salmon Creek in Bertie County, near Edenton, at the time of his death. He was too gentle a man to successfully cope with the times in which he lived, but under his rule the Indians were subdued, and the colony prospered. Eden it was who was accused of being one of Teach's accomplices, but this accusation lacks proof. Probably there was only envy and malice back of the accusation.

Christopher Gale was an Englishman who came to North Carolina in the last decade of the seventeenth century. He was a man of considerable learning, and was justice of the General Court in 1703. Later he was appointed a member of the provincial council or deputy to the Lords Proprietors. He was major of militia; commissioner to South Carolina in 1712; captured by the French in the same year; collector of customs, and attorney-general. In

1712 he became chief justice, holding this office until 1717. Again he was reinstated into the office in 1722, when he served two years. He was one of the original vestrymen of St. Thomas Parish, being appointed in 1715. He went to England in 1724, but soon returned, being made chief justice for the third time. In 1727 he was appointed one of the commissioners to run the boundary between North Carolina and Virginia. His wife was Mrs. Sara Harvey, widow of Governor Harvey. He died at Edenton, in Chowan, though he resided at Bath for the most of his life.

Tobias Knight, secretary to the government of Carolina, vestryman in the original vestry of St. Thomas Parish, deputy to John Danson and Lord Craven, Lords Proprietors, lived at Bath. In Governor Eden's time he was suspected of being confederate with Edward Teach, the pirate. He was a collector of the customs, and was chief justice for a short time before his death.

John Lawson, surveyor-general of North Carolina until his death in September, 1711, at the hands of the Indians, was a citizen and a landowner in Bath. He was our earliest historian, and was a good naturalist, in addition to being a good writer and surveyor. The debt that North Carolina owes to this consistent chronicler who wrote *Lawson's History of North Carolina,* as it is generally known today, is no small one.

Dr. Patrick Maule was another of the first vestrymen of St. Thomas Church. "Mr. Maule, my Deputy, is a man of learning, and has a plentiful fortune," says Edmond Porter, Esquire, judge of the admiralty court.[53] He had been deputy surveyor, and was one of the trustees appointed for the Bath Library in 1715. He was also justice of the peace for Beaufort precinct, and lived at Maule's Point, below Bath, which still holds his name. He married Mary, daughter of John Porter, senior.[54]

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[53] *C. R.*, III, 514.
[54] See elsewhere in these notes.

Edward Moseley was one of the purchasers of land in the Town of Bath. Moseley's name stands out clear in the annals of early North Carolina, though he is not very intimately concerned with the history of Bath and Beaufort County. He was a member of the council in 1705; Virginia boundary line commissioner both in 1710 and in 1728; public treasurer in 1715; surveyor-general in 1723; South Carolina boundary line commissioner in 1737; commissioner to revise laws in 1740; chief baron of the exchequer in 1743; commissioned to run Granville's line in 1746, and was speaker of the Assembly at various times after 1715.[55]

John Porter was one of the four men in whom was invested the oversight of the town of Bath after its reincorporation in 1715. He was speaker of the Assembly in 1697; he was a member of the general court, attorney-general, and a member of the council at later dates. He always espoused the cause of the people in their fight against tyranny for their chartered rights, taking the popular side in the Carey Rebellion.

Robert Palmer was a member of the assembly, of the council, and was a surveyor general of His Majesty's late in the colonial period. Palmer lived at Bath, and was a consistent member of St. Thomas Church, wherein the body of his wife lies buried.

John Worley, a vestryman of Chowan Parish, a member of the council, and a justice of the general court, lived on the tract of land on which Washington stands between the years 1727 and 1729.

[55]Grimes, *Some Short North Carolina Biographies.* North Carolina Day Program, 1904.

MEMBERS OF THE ASSEMBLY.

According to the law of 1741, Beaufort County was entitled to two seats in the general assembly, and Bath Town, by virtue of the Bath Town Act, was entitled to one member. The assemblies usually met once every two years, except in the case of called meetings, at different towns within the colony, Bath, Newbern, Wilmington, and Halifax being the towns most frequently honored with meetings. The assembly passed such laws as were necessary to the welfare of the colony which were not embraced in the royal statutes of Great Britain. It provided for the safety and welfare of the province, and in short, it performed functions very similar to the functions performed by a session of the general assembly today. When a member was duly chosen to represent his town or county, there was nothing to keep him from representing the people for the rest of his life, provided he looked out for the welfare of his people, made a good public servant, and deported himself in a proper fashion in the assembly.

A list of the members of the general assembly from Beaufort County and Bath Town from 1731, the year in which Beaufort County was regarded as a separate county, up to and including the year 1775, the year of the outbreak of the Revolution, follows:

Year	*From Beaufort County*	*From Bath Town*
1731	Edward Salter, Simon Alderson	Roger Kenyon
1733	Maj. Robert Turner, Dr. Patrick Maule	John Lahey
1734	Edward Salter, Maj. Robert Turner	Roger Kenyon
1735	Maj. Robert Turner, Dr. Patrick Maule	Roger Kenyon
1740	Simon Alderson, Benjamin Peyton	Roger Kenyon
1742	Simon Alderson, Benjamin Peyton	Robert Turner
1744	John Barrow, Benjamin Peyton	Michael Coutanch
1746	John Barrow, Benjamin Peyton	Wyriot Ormond
1747	John Barrow, Benjamin Peyton	Michael Coutanch
1749	John Barrow, Wyriot Ormond	Michael Coutanch
1753	John Barrow, Wyriot Ormond	Michael Coutanch
1754	John Hardy, William Spier	Michael Coutanch
1755	John Hardy, William Spier	Michael Coutanch
1758	John Hardy, William Spier	Michael Coutanch
1760	John Barrow, John Simpson	Michael Coutanch
1761	John Barrow, Thomas Respess	Michael Coutanch
1762	John Barrow, Thomas Respess	Robert Palmer
1762	John Barrow, James Ellison	Wyriot Ormond
1764	John Barrow, Thomas Bonner	Wyriot Ormond
1766	John Barrow, Thomas Respess	Patrick Gordon

Year	*From Beaufort County*	*From Bath Town*
1767	John Barrow, Thomas Respess	Peter Blinn
1769	James Bonner, Moses Hare	Wyriot Ormond
1771	Thomas Bonner, Moses Hare	John Maule
1773	Thomas Respess, Roger Ormond	Wyriot Ormond
1773	Thomas Respess, Roger Ormond (Special sess.)	Wyriot Ormond
1774	Thomas Respess, Roger Ormond	William Brown
1775	Thomas Respess, Jr., Roger Ormond	William Brown

Beaufort County was well represented at each of the provincial congresses which met to provide for the safety and welfare of the state. In the provincial congress which met at Newbern, August 25, 1774, Roger Ormond and Thomas Respess represented Beaufort County, and William Brown sat for Bath.

In the second provincial congress which met at Newbern, April 3, 1775, were present Roger Ormond and Thomas Respess, Jr., representing Beaufort County, and William Brown represented Bath.

At the third provincial congress which assembled in Hillsboro August 25, 1775, Roger Ormond, Thomas Respess, Jr., John Patten, and John Cooper represented Beaufort County at large, and William Brown Bath.

At the fourth congress, met at Halifax, April 4, 1776, Roger Ormond, Thomas Respess, Jr., and John Cooper represented the county, and William Brown again represented Bath.

At the last provincial congress which met at Halifax on November 20, 1776, Messrs. John Barrow, Thomas Respess, Jr., Francis Jones, and Robert Tripp sat for Beaufort County, and William Brown for Bath Town.

The third provincial congress, meeting at Hillsboro, appointed as officers in the Continental Regiment of Beaufort County James Bonner, Colonel; Thomas Bonner, Lieutenant-Colonel; Roger Ormond, 1st Major, and William Brown, 2d Major.

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